

/379 cont./

581 In marriage, they conceive the relations between husband and wife as natural, and, as the purpose of these relations, or, better, as the purpose of marriage, the procreation of children for the tribe.

• 836 They do not recognize, however, the exclusive right of one spouse over the other with regard to these relations. There is
837 then nothing to say about conjugal fidelity (97),

[115] 97. One of the Missionaries, with 30 years of residence among the Indians, in conversation with the author of this work, appeared impressed by episodes involving an individual who went so far as to abuse the wife of another, without this causing repulsion on the part of the husband or surprise on the part of the others.

just as there is nothing to be said about virginity (98)

[115] 98. In putting together a vocabulary, we noticed several significant facts. Many natives consulted by us, among them the most educated alumni of the Missions, could not find an equivalent for the Portuguese term fornicação /fornication/, that is, one which would express illegitimate sexual relations. They indicated the same terms as for the legitimate relations between the spouses, affirming positively that different terms for these diverse relations did not exist. Likewise they did not know of a word corresponding to the Portuguese adultério /adultery/, affirming, moreover, that it does not exist in the Tucano language. The Veteran Missionary Pe. Pedro Kok, out of need for his ministry, created two terms descriptive of the act, that is, Wōakŕé manapō-tígo-ne and Wōakŕé pō mō-tígo-ne, in order to express,

*[192]

/379 cont./

* 192

• 836

837

/footnote 98 cont./ respectively, adultery on the part of the man or of the woman. According to consultations held with nine persons of both sexes, in different places, the result is that these terms combined constituted an inexpressive redundancy. Wōákñe or Wōákahñe means simply relation of the sexes, without the qualification of legitimate or illegitimate by our Christian morals. The addition to the word Wōákñe of the specific term "with one who has a husband," manapō-tigo-ne, or "with one who has a wife," nō'mō-tigō-nē, does not give it the idea of illegitimacy, which the natives do not even comprehend. Just as there also does not exist in the Tukano language (and moreover in the other native idioms) a term corresponding to the concept of virginity. Already during our first stay among those tribes, in 1947, the Irmã Superiora /Sister Superior/ of one of the girls' schools of the Mission told us how some of the students, upon hearing so much talk about virginity, but having difficulty in learning this concept, came to ask her for more clarification.

[797]

836

837

of the bride. Legally virginity can not exist, as will be seen below (VIII -- 1, b (7)). The Catechesis, in referring to the Most Holy Virgin, Mother of God, uses in Tukano the Latin expression "Maria Virgo" /Virgin Mary/.

837

We thought at first (and so manifested) that the acts characterized by us as conjugal infidelities were not punished because the husband feared the vengeance of the rival or that his wife might leave him. We must change this opinion, in the face of numerous and categorical affirmations by natives of eight different tribes (Tukano, Taryana, Pirá-tapuya, Ipeka, Tuyuka, Bará, Desāna, and Wanāna), /380/ some of whom, well informed about

/380 cont./

837 other tribes, with whom they live in the same maloca or povoado, promised us that the same happens among all the tribes of this region.

881 After the individuals of both sexes have gone through the puberty initiation, -- be they married or single -- sexual relations

• 836 with a large number of persons of the tribe and, under some conditions, also with those of other tribes, and with the civilized themselves, are permissible for them.

833 They conceive the sexual relations between the two sexes (99)

[838]
[881]

99. Male or female homosexuality, it seems, has always been regarded as something reprobable and, for this reason, always practiced secretly. Officially, as far as is reported, it only exists in the puberty rite of the boys.

as a normal pleasure for the individuals who have reached legal majority by the puberty rite, and therefore such relations are practiced publicly, in front of their own parents or their own spouse (100),

100. It is understandable that the relations, although legally permissible, might not always be prudent and thus are not practiced publicly. Such is the case for the individual who, having fought with the husband, does not touch his wife in his presence. This comes from positive information obtained.

just as the various physiological acts of eating, drinking, or anything else are performed in front of any person (101).

[829]

101. Out of mixed feelings of distrust and hostility toward the civilized, or even because they know directly or indirectly that their morals condemn these liberties, they do not

/384 cont./

c) Extramarital incontinence.

831

[521]

The freedom with which the Indian deals with some subjects, with a realism at times crude, is well known. And this not only among themselves, but also with the civilized. Equally well known is the immorality of the conversation among themselves on trips, as in the interior of their malocas, in the hours of rest, interlaced with frequent and lewd laughter. There are not only ambiguous words in their vocabulary, but a whole assemblage of words and sentences of immoral caliber.

*[192]

Moreover there are more than enough proofs of premarital and extramarital incontinence, Wôákîse, wôákahlîse, yôâsé or hîâîsé (108).

108. Cônego /Canon/ André Fernandes de Souza, Vigário /Vicar/ of S. Gabriel, already revealed this in 1793: --"With respect to the two vices of incontinence and gluttony, vices so natural to the Indian people, that it seems that they have already stifled and destroyed all their freedom" (o. c., p. 499). The same was reported by Frei Gregório de Bene, Apostolic Missionary of the Uaupés from 1850 to 1852, explaining the reason why, especially in some places, he had to delay administering the sacraments.

1) Premarital liberties.

• 936

One notes some vigilance by the parents, especially the mothers (at least in front of the civilized), over the daughters who have reached a certain age. It is not enough, however, especially if the circumstances of their life, their works, and customs are considered. And a greater sexual impulse is manifested in the girls who have reached a certain physiological development.

/384 cont./

• 836

inducing them, not infrequently, to provocation (109)

[832]
[515]

109. While bathing, the girls agitate the water, with the hand cupped, from below upwards, with a characteristic noise. The boys respond to this signal by fanning their open hands in front of the chest, one higher than the other, so that they are crossed without meeting, and, since they are almost on the surface of the water, they produce a noise that is heard at a distance of two hundred meters or more. This provocative noise is called Pixtwasé.

*[192]

and invitation to the boys.

832

836

[515]

/385/ Although the old customs state that the bathing of the women precedes that of the men and should be before the break of day, sometimes the Indians are surprised in mixed bathing during the warm hours of the day.

*[192]
[278]

The young women prepare philters or potions, known by the Nheengatú name of Puçanga (in Tukano Ox-kó), which they give to the young men to drink in order to attract them to them; or, in front of their eyes, they wear or rub on themselves roots and plants to which is attributed an aphrodisiac virtue.

842

847

848

The cases of illegitimate pregnancy of maidens are not rare, although they know (110)

110. We had gathered for the "centro de Pesquisas" /Research Center/ of Iauareté some plants considered as sterilizing and abortive. While organizing the herbarium, some identifying labels fell off. We called on three maidens, and with the greatest facility, upon seeing the plants, they indicated the name and the purpose, exactly as was stated on the labels.

/387 cont./

628
831
648

At times there are individuals of different tribes participating in the caxiris and dabacuris, and then the same sexual liberties regularly take place between them (116).

[574]

116. Koch Grünberg in various circumstances sets forth the sexual liberties of the girls, even with individuals of another tribe (Z. I. 189). A Tuyuka tells him without reserve the intentions of the pairs who leave the maloca: it is the satisfaction of their appetites (Z. I. 372). A young Tukano woman volunteered that in the Dabacuris, when a girl is invited at the same time by men of different tribes, she will first consider those of another tribe. It is perhaps a form of courtesy toward visitors.

592
582
• 836
797

In the modern regime of family houses (and the problem obviously could only be posed for this regime) the cases of an open and enduring conjugal life outside of the official marriage are rare (117).

117. Although there are also known exceptions in which the Missionary intervenes in order to hasten the marriage. In Acuaricuara, 1946, river Paca, a fatherless young woman of the Suryana tribe went to live with a young man of her tribe, in his house, where he lived in company with his widowed mother. Faced with such a well-known fact, the Missionary observed to her that they should have the religious marriage. The young man appeared favorably disposed and asked the Padre to speak to his mother. The latter, however, not only did not consent, because the young people were from the same tribe, but she immediately expelled the girl from her house. (Event reported

592

582

797

836

/387 cont./

/footnote 117 cont./ by the Monfortian
Missionary, Pe. Humberto Linpena /sic/)

835

Even more infrequent (it is true that they practice so many sexual liberties and are such small groups that such cases could not be numerous) is incestuous concubinage between parents and children (118).

118. A public case in Teresita (river Papuri)
between a Desana individual, who would
not find a wife, and his own mother.

[842]
[847]

In these cases they always avoid children, not only with the help of the puçangas /potions/, but also through physical and mechanical processes (119).

119. We learned of a man in Urubucuará,
river Uaupés, who had two children from
the relations with his own daughter: one
was aborted in a few months, and the other
one lived only a short time after its birth.

2) Extramartial liberties.

831

We thought at first, and so did the Missionaries, that the licentiousness of the periodic caxiris was merely an eclipse in the upright and normal sexual life of the natives.

It has already been noted that in the most solemn ones, the Dabacurís, the body paintings are executed by persons of the other sex.

[797]

/388/ In any caxiri, when excited by the drinks, liberties take place. Outside of the caxiri, testifies Pe. Afonso Kuipers from Teresita, "they are aware (120)

120. This concept of the Missionary can

584 /412 cont./

will be promised in marriage to another family. In practice, they

584 will be bride and bridegroom, with the right to relations between

- 836 them (with precautions, however, in order not to have children), perhaps for many years and with a great difference in age between the ones being married. And the child, once it has barely reached the age of reason, knows that it must marry such a person.

584 4th. A fourth one is that a widowed father will give up a
587 daughter in order to arrange for a second wife for himself, although with a great disproportion between their ages, before he procures one for his son.

587 5th. A fifth one is that a woman, becoming a widow, can pass to her brother-in-law as a wife, if he is a widower or a bachelor and without a bride, from which his father has an obligation to give a woman to such a family, in exchange for the other one whom he obtained from there. Although the law of the levirate (12)

12. That is, the duty of an individual to marry the sister-in-law who was widowed without children, in order to resuscitate the lineage of his late brother, a custom that was in force among the Jews.

does not exist among our Indians, we thus have its practice.

582 6th. A sixth one is that, from this exchange of women of a
611 tribe A with those of tribe B, since the children are regarded as belonging to the father's tribe, cousins can marry each other. For example, of two pairs of brothers and sisters, M and N from tribe A and P and Q from tribe B, the woman M married P, whose sister Q was joined in matrimony to N. The children of these two couples are, obviously, "cousins-german" or "cousins in the first degree." Nevertheless the children of P belong to the tribe B, and those of N, to the tribe A. They consider themselves reciprocally Baxsúkara, and they may marry each other.

so an older brother is *amyóbakū* (older brother-father) to his younger sister. He is her guardian. He may arrange her marriage, or offer her sexually to a friend, if she is willing. It is a special relationship in many respects.

Seniority is of consequence only in the sibling generation. There is no concept of senior line and no recognition in terminology of descendants of older or younger siblings.

Apart from sex and seniority, Cubeo sibling terms also demarcate social distance. They differentiate, as already noted, three degrees of sibling closeness: lineage sibling, near phratry sibling, and distant phratry sibling. They do so, ingeniously, by the linguistic device of using a common root for sibling — this usage is only in the senior term, because only the senior term is important — indicating distance or closeness by the use of appropriate prefixes and suffixes. The root for senior sibling of either sex is *ami*. With the possessive prefix *hi* and the gender suffix *ko* or *kū* (*himāmiko*, *-kū*) it connotes utmost closeness and is applied to older brother and sister of one's own family, including the extended joint family or lineage. Since sib and lineage may often be coextensive these terms are also sib-wide. The term *himāmiko* (my older sister) does not apply to a mother's sister's daughter unless she happens to be — via brother-sister exchange marriage — a father's brother's daughter as well. The intimate usage, that is, must also correspond with coresidence. One's own sister, to be sure, does marry out, but in the meantime there has been a long period of coresidence. In any case, there is not the slightest tendency to slur over a nuclear kinship relationship. In the case of father's brother's daughter the intimate term applies only when she is still a coresident. After she has married she falls into the next more distant category.

The second range of kinship intimacy is the most widespread of all, including sib, subsub, and all close sibs within the phratry. It may even be applied to all members of the phratry of one's generation, in which case the third and most distant form of sibling terminology is reserved for those people whom one does not know well. The terms used in this second range are *amiyō* and *amihō*. The suffix *yo* conveys the meaning of "such as" or "one who is of the class of." It is also used in the term *bakūdyō* (father's brother) and means literally "one who is in the class of a father." In *amiyō* it means, therefore, "one who is in the class of an older brother." Strictly speaking, the suffix *yo* has no sex gender and if it were applied to a woman would constitute no major linguistic blunder. But since one's contacts are almost invariably with male siblings, the sisters normally at a distance, the

593

561

[584]

[836]

601

193

601

[614]

[614]

[615]

601

193

593

A brother and a sister who are close to one another in age and who show a fondness for one another are regarded as being linked in a bond that is both warmer and more specialized than the normal bonds between a brother and a sister. The girl is spoken of as "belonging" to her brother. The boy prepares a manioc garden for his sister and she in turn barter a good part of her farinha production in his behalf, getting him fishhooks, ammunition, jewelry, and items of clothing. He will always bring something for her. If he wishes to act as host in a drinking party his assigned special sister has a particular obligation to assist in the preparation of chicha. They do not exchange the ordinary male-female foodstuffs since that is strictly a connubial form of reciprocity and the unmarried are part of their parents' household. They do simulate a conjugal relationship, though, in that they reportedly allow themselves the intimacy of external coitus (i.e., without intromission). On the other hand, since the girl has been allotted to her brother to be part of an exchange marriage, he assumes the right to offer his sister's sexual favors to persons of his choosing, although, as in the case of an exchange marriage, he cannot force her to accept a man against her will.

593

583

583

58

[593]

[593]

As the Cubeo explain it, the purpose of the brother-sister relationship is to provide for the boy's marriage. Since the most desirable marriages are those in which brothers exchange sisters, a boy, they say, must have a sister assigned to him if he is to have a strong bargaining position. The Cubeo do recognize the validity of a material bride price, but very few families will readily yield a daughter merely for objects. They want a daughter-in-law to replace a daughter. Exchange marriages are complicated because it does not often happen that the exchange can be immediate. The delay in completing an exchange transaction calls for a reliable guarantee that the agreement will be adhered to. For this, several recourses are available. The ultimate recourse is force. The aggrieved party will raid a household that has reneged and hope to abduct a bride, or, more commonly, love magic will be used to lure the girl away. The most assured contract is one involving cross-cousins, since it draws upon the absolute priority of relationship between a brother and a sister, who are always principals in such a marriage negotiation. But even this has a loophole in that the girl must be willing. By and large, it is the attitude of the bride-to-be that the Cubeo regard as unpredictable. If she enters upon a marriage with reservations that are not removed soon after she has been taken to her husband's community she can be counted upon to run home and stir up complications. The special brother-sister relationship is intended to guard against this. On one

cipals in the marriage were not attracted to each other. It is to avoid this embarrassment that the marriage party does not declare its intentions. They announce that they have come to visit relatives. They are made welcome, assigned to sleeping quarters, and are drawn into the general round of activities of the house. They may stay for many weeks. The groom-to-be joins in the activities of his age group, hunting and fishing with them. He spends part of his time in making gifts for his host's wife, who need not be the prospective mother-in-law, and for the mother-in-law-to-be as well, if he has been a guest in her household. He may make baskets, trays, or a hammock. Every woman treasures an object that a suitor has made. These objects, however, are not presented as marriage gifts but as offerings in return for hospitality.

The courtship itself is a slow process. For some time the prospective bride and groom virtually avoid one another. The young man is attentive to the other girls of the sib, and his own age mates, if single, act as though they are courting the prospective bride. They are all looking one another over. The young man's personality is evaluated, and his skills in hunting, fishing, and crafts are observed. The visiting party, for its part, makes close observations on the bride-to-be. The nature of this opening phase of the courtship in which bride and groom are being "looked over" is such that unexpected matches are sometimes made. It has happened that a boy who has been flirting with his bride-to-be's sister to divert attention from his real objective falls in love with her. Or the sister falls in love with the suitor and seeks her betrothed sister's permission to marry him. This happened among the *Bahúkiwa*. A man, having reached the final stages of courtship with a girl, had arranged the formal elopement tryst with her. At the end it was the sister who appeared, explaining that it was she who wanted to marry him, with her sister's consent. The suitor was not disappointed, and all went well.

If the young man is satisfied with the bride-to-be the party prolongs its stay. Otherwise it leaves quickly. Once it has decided to stay, the groom awaits a sign of acceptance from the girl. One of the first indications of sexual interest that she shows is to run rather than walk in his presence. When the older folk see a girl running when she should be walking they smile knowingly at one another. One day she throws a handful of manioc mash in his face in the presence of company and laughs at him. He pretends anger and moves upon her. She pretends fright and runs off to her manioc garden, where he overtakes her. They have coitus and they are then engaged. She may show her interest in other ways, pinching him or cuffing him as she

614
583
584
574

614
584
[574]
[481]

[836]

614

584

[836]

[832]

[789]

walks by. If she runs from him toward her manioc garden his quest is over. Since it is the girl who must indicate acceptance by inviting coitus, the young man comes prepared with love charms. One of these is an extract of *iwé*, the plant associated with the ancestral cult, a symbol of power and virility, which he sprinkles upon her when she is unaware. This makes her desire him very passionately. After marriage a man uses what is apparently an antiaphrodisiac charm to keep his wife faithful.

614

583

584

(601)

Actually a wedding party is engaged in three levels of negotiation simultaneously, all three of which must be successful. The first is the courtship, the second is the discussions going on between the parents and the elders of the party over the terms of the marriage, and the third is the discussion between the groom and his *teimá*, his male cross-cousin, the bride's brother. The *teimá* is involved because a daughter will not be let go unless a return bride can be secured for him. It is up to the groom to promise the *teimá* his own sister in return. Since no marriage is honorable that does not establish a proper relationship with an affinal sib, a man would be a scoundrel if he eloped with a girl without paying heed to these formal matters. Normally there are no difficulties, since the courtship would not get very far if the *teimá* or the parents were seriously dissatisfied with the terms of marriage.

614

574

583

584

It is typical of the Cubeo that the atmosphere in which these three levels of negotiation are conducted is a genial one. Their mode of hospitality assures this by drawing guests fully into the life of the *maloca* and of the community — the groom joining the age group of his *teimá*, the elders picking up corresponding social roles in their age group. The wife of a visiting elder is assigned a section of manioc garden. The point is that a guest who is going to spend more than a few days is as near as possible "at home." It is when the people feel at ease in their familiar roles in a new setting that they get down to business. When the marriage party has left with its bride it has also succeeded in strengthening the ties of friendship with an affinal sib and has overcome in practice the general theory that an affinal is a hostile sib of the tribe.

614

619

574

583

584

This mood of geniality is not achieved, nor is it sought for, in all circumstances. When the marriage is intertribal the courtship is conducted in an atmosphere of strain that is almost impossible to overcome. The bride's sib cannot be easily consoled at the loss of a daughter. When the marriage does occur they feel that they have been tricked in some way. They resent the girl's willingness to go off; they are mistrustful of the bride price and the promised exchange

DEVELOPMENT OF THE INDIVIDUAL

181

The Cubeo have no dread of menstruation and menstrual taboos are relatively minor. A man will not copulate with a menstruating woman because he believes it will make him lazy. On the other hand, if there is a sick person in the house a menstruant will move and live in a shelter nearby, or else the ill person cannot recover. For her part the menstruant must avoid the river, or she will be killed by the water anaconda. She may not enter a canoe for fear that the headman of the fish will destroy the canoe.

Menstrual blood (*hive*) is not human blood, but is believed to be blood of the moon. The moon, according to the Cubeo, is an ardent hunter who comes down to earth to copulate with unmarried girls and with women who are not pregnant. No one conceives by the moon. The moon is said to deflorate the woman, causing her to bleed. The hymen, according to this belief, grows back and the moon repeats his sexual connection each month. When a woman has erotic dreams she knows that the moon will come to her.

SEX LIFE

Under Cubeo rules of phratric exogamy the young people of a community may reach the age of marriage without having had sexual relations with an eligible marriage partner. The young people are limited to clandestine incestuous affairs and to public homosexual play. It was difficult to get information on the sex life of the unmarried, although I was aware of affairs between sib brother and sister. One informant told me that it was not improper for brother and sister to indulge in external coitus. According to this man, it was intromission that constituted incest. True coitus between sib brother and sister is not regarded lightly. Offenders may be put to death, and their souls after death, it is said, will be animals that will not associate with people. I never witnessed any gesture of sexual intimacy between a grown boy and girl of the same sib or phratry. Young children who indulge in heterosexual play are shamed by the older boys for ignoring the proprieties of privacy.

As for homosexual play, girls stroke one another's nipples to produce erection, and boys sometimes indulge in mutual masturbation. This kind of play is public and involves no shame. I have already mentioned the Cubeo enjoyment of body contact. In the younger people it is a mild form of homosexual eroticism. True homosexuality, however, seems to be rare. I learned of no case of persistent male homosexuality, and only one case of a woman. This woman developed strong male characteristics and eventually, it is said, she grew a penis.